

Road Map to Teen Driver Safety



Car accidents are the number one cause of death for teenagers. Reckless driving, poor risk assessment, failure to wear seatbelts, and unnecessary distractions all are major contributors. Begin talking about road safety before your teen starts riding with friends. Always know who and how many friends will be in the car, as the likelihood of an accident rises with the number of young passengers. Limit trips to daylight hours, and be ready to intervene when the weather creates dangerous road conditions. Agree to pick up your teen anytime or anywhere if he or she is riding with a driver who's impaired or behaving recklessly. Some conditions, like icy roads, take time to master, so treat your teen's first few years of driving like an apprenticeship. Review defensive driving techniques, how to recognize and avoid hazards, and basic car maintenance every few months.

Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month

It's 3-D Prevention Month. Help ensure a safe holiday season out on the roads. Plan a safe ride home before attending events where alcohol is served; eat before attending parties; slow your alcoholic intake by alternating between alcoholic and nonalcoholic drinks; and bring extra cash in case you need to call a cab. If you're hosting an event, provide a place for overzealous revelers to sleep it off. Collect car keys at the door so that all drivers have to check in with you before leaving.



Teens and Online Photo Safety

Kids begin socializing on the Internet long before they're old enough to be aware of its dangers. Make sure your child is interacting only on age-appropriate sites. Review all photos before allowing your youngster to share them online with friends. Examine each photo closely for school names, monogrammed clothing, house numbers or unique personal effects. These elements are used by online predators to gain access and trust. Learn more internet safety tips at www.netsmarkidz.org. For older children check out www.nsteens.org.

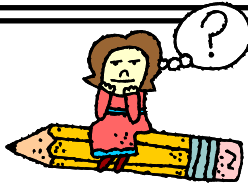


Holiday Stress Tip Let Go and Get Going

It's not the chores, shopping, and Uncle Fred's visit that's stressing you out – it's your anticipation of them! The solution? Get moving! Act now by creating a to-do list. Organizing, planning, and prioritizing tasks will help minimize panic and negativity. Stress is a mental state, so tackle the stuff you dread first. Review your expectations to make sure they are realistic. Forget about possible outcomes that are outside of your control. When lapsing into catastrophic thinking, ask yourself, "What's the worst that could happen?" Is serving a dry turkey the end of the world? Probably not.



Don't "Write Off" This Skill!



Is your workplace correspondence generating more head scratching than head nodding? If so you are probably one of many employees whose writing skills need improvement. Business leaders cite poor writing skills as one of their top employee complaints. Poorly crafted correspondence creates confusion, dilutes the message, and can harm your professional image. Managers report they're more likely to hire and promote those who write well. Try these helpful tips. 1) Get right to the point. Clarity is more important than style. 2) Do a first draft, and then go back and simplify. 3) Avoid multiple-word phrases like "at this moment in time" in favor of shorter ones like "now." 4) Use positive language like "Conservation is our office goal" rather than "We need to stop being so wasteful." 5) Use active voice whenever possible. Active voice means the subject is the doer—"We're starting a new project." rather than "A new project has been started." 6) When fumbling for the right words, imagine speaking instead of writing, and then put it to paper. 7) Let correspondence, including e-mails, sit a while before doing your final proofread. 8) Here's a secret professional writers use: Read your work out loud to catch the smallest errors. A co-worker's ear can help ensure that you're using the right tone and that everything makes sense. 9) If possible, attend one of the Written Communication courses offered by the Washington State Department of Personnel such as *Writing Documents in Plain Talk*. www.dop.wa.gov/Employees/TrainingAndDevelopment/

Teaching Kids Saving Skills



If you're determined to teach your child to save money, start early. Consider the following approach if it fits your parenting style: Start with a short-term, easily achieved goal like saving for a special toy. Establish the relationship between work and money by tying an allowance to small household chores. During each payment, separate spending money and savings in front of your child, and place the savings into a clear container. Seeing the coins pile up will provide visual affirmation of progress. Once a savings goal is reached, make a big event of the purchase. Be sure to let your child carry the money and hand it over to the cashier. As your child grows older, you can create longer target dates for purchases and encourage greater responsibility by replacing mandatory savings requirements with matching funds for each saved dollar.

Freebies for Frozen Budgets



Looking to trim your budget? These six great online services with little or no cost may help:

- 1) Save money and maintain a clean environment by trading your old books with other readers at paperbackswap.com. You'll pay only shipping.
- 2) Log on to hulu.com, where you can watch current and classic television shows. There's also a good movie section.
- 3) If music's more your thing, try slacker.com for access to dozens of free internet radio stations. You can even customize playlists based on your preferences.
- 4) Ugh. Sloppy-joes again? Find a new dish for your rotation at allrecipes.com.
- 5) Perhaps even better, find a restaurant where your kids can eat free by using kidsmeal-deals.com.
- 6) No internet connection? No problem. wififreespot.com will show you where to find all the local free wireless hotspots.

Shared Space Squabble Busters

Working harmoniously in close quarters requires self-awareness and sensitivity toward others. Shared space environments naturally magnify minor irritants and disagreements. Getting along with coworkers is a lot like dealing with family, so take the occasional squabble in stride. Squabble busters: Keep a neat work space and wipe down surfaces once per day to prevent spreading germs. Pitch in on maintaining community areas – those microwave splatters won't disappear by themselves. Dispose of your lunch remains in an outside garbage can rather than towering the trash in a tiny wastebasket and fouling the air. Keep noise levels to a minimum and take personal calls someplace private. Tune in to the mood and stress levels of those around you. A slack period for you may be crunch time for others.

